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We may, of course, have *more or less* of right or well-being ; we may have a certain proportion of elements which we approve as right or perfect ; but there seems no reason to hold that the mere mean between the extremes of actual experience is necessarily a desirable quantity, and if one quantity is preferable to another in any case, it can only be so with reference to the circumstances of the case and the kind of qualities concerned. Of some things we can never have too much, of others the smallest instalment may be more than enough.

When it is affirmed that the proportioned is the ideal,—the right, the true, the beautiful,—if what is meant is the *rightly* or *duly* proportioned, the assertion is indisputable ; but it is also circular and begs the question. If we make Right, etc., depend upon any other and *mere quantitative* test, the view is plainly inadequate.

I conclude, then, with regard to the general doctrine of the book, *first*, that it is not only unproved, but also unprovable, that all relations can be resolved into relations of quantity ; *second*, that the author has pressed the doctrine of the Mean beyond what it will bear, and has not kept clear the distinction between what *is* and what *is coming to be*, or between the *actual* and the *ideal*. The exaggeration here given to quantitative considerations is a striking instance of the “human too much,” which, by such a strenuous advocate of the doctrine of the Mean, ought to have been avoided.

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**CHRISTIAN ETHICS.** Eight Lectures preached before the University of Oxford, in the year 1895, on the foundation of the late Rev. John Bampton. By Thomas B. Strong, M.A., Student of Christ Church. London, New York, and Bombay: Longmans, Green & Co., 1896.

This is a good and interesting book. Mr. Strong regards his subject from the point of view of one who adopts the traditional Christian position. For him, the main point is that Christianity gave to man a new spring of moral life, because it admitted him, “in proportion to the certainty of his faith in it, into a clear and decisive knowledge of the spiritual Divine order.”

Mr. Strong is in sympathy with the ruling ideas of modern philosophical ethics. He holds the unity and solidarity of mankind. He sees that the individual can have no moral life apart

from a social universe in which to live and move. But he also detects the latent paganism of much of our modern ethical thought. He sees that religion is often treated as a thing which "belongs to the taste and speculative powers of particular individuals." The state has come to be regarded as "the true home and natural sphere of action of the human spirit." Hence the separation of the highest and most spiritual part of man—his religion—from the whole of his life. The general relation of religion to life has been lost.

This result is inconsistent with the claim of Christianity, as well as with the teaching of a sound philosophy; for "Christianity makes a complete and supreme claim over the whole life of man throughout all ages," and the unity of human life is destroyed.

Mr. Strong's solution of the problem is that the church, not the state, should be the sphere in which the moral activities of the individual should find their fullest exercise, and that the church should set itself to the production of Christian character by means of discipline.

To many this will seem a mere return to mediævalism. To others it will seem an ecclesiastical dream, and nothing more. Yet can there be any doubt that Mr. Strong is, on the whole, philosophically consistent and that the conception of the church as moral universe is far grander and far nearer to the ideal than the conception of the state?

Lecture VI. is devoted to an interesting discussion of "Morality and Reason." Mr. Strong protests against the disparagement of reason which marks some recent books. But it may be questioned whether his own position differs very much from that of the writers he censures. To appeal to faith in the wisdom (or reason) of God can scarcely be regarded as a rational (in the scientific sense of the word) justification of human life. To fall back upon superhuman reason when human reason fails is hardly inconsistent with the doctrine of Mr. Balfour and Mr. Kidd.

But, surely, the controversy is ultimately a battle of words. The reason which justifies morality is not the reason of science, the abstract intelligence. To claim for reason a higher exercise and more concrete function is undoubtedly necessary, but it is well, when we make the claim, to understand that we have given another meaning to the word.

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